THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Tax-GDP ratios in respect of the Central Government during the last three years are as under:

2000-01	8.96
2001-02	8.15
2002-03 (Provisional)	8.81

Outsourcing of income tax processing assignments

940. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assured the public to process all income tax and corporate tax returns within four months and make refunds accordingly in all I.T. Circles;

(b) if so, the number of returns processed and refunds made during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that where it is not possible to make refunds within 4 months of filling the returns, Government propose to outsource the processing assignment; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of returns processed and refunds made during the last three years are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) the Chief Commissioners/Commissioners of Income Tax have been authorised to outsource the work of data entry of returns wherever it is not possible to manage the work of data entry of returns with the departmental manpower.

Statement

Number of returns processed and refunds made during the last three years

Financial year	Number of returns processed	Refunds made (in rupees)
2000-01	1,91,49,535	12,370 Crores
2001-02	2,05,32,518	17,278 Crores
2002-03	3,50,07,785	22,627 Crores

Status paper on external debt

941. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently released a status paper on India's external debt;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the current foreign debt burden on the country as on date; and

(d) whether it is feasibe to attain zero debt burden and if so, the measures proposed to be taken to achieve the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As per the Status Report, India's external debt stood at US $ 105 billion at end December, 2002.

(d) Government of India follows a prudent external debt management policy and as a result the external debt indicators have progressively improved over time. The incidence of external debt burden measured by debt-GDP ratio almost halved from 38.7 per cent in 1991-92 to 20.6 percent in 2002-03 (end-December, 2002). However, in the background of on-going process of global integration, where much of the capital movements result from individual and corporate initiatives, attaining zero